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REMARKS

This amendment is responsive to the communication of February 27, 2003. Reconsideration of claims 1-9, 11-14 and 16-19 is respectfully requested.

The Office Action

Claims 3 was objected to as failing to show every feature of invention.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 15 and 18-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Maas (U.S. Patent Publication US 2001/0049893 A1).

Claims 11, 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Simms (U.S. Patent No. 5,590,945).

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maas (U.S. Patent Publication US 2001/0049893 A1).

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maas (U.S. Patent Publication US 2001/0049893 A1) in view of Tokunaga (U.S. Patent No. 5,375,043).

Claims 6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maas (U.S. Patent Publication US 2001/0049893 A1) in view of Yamana (U.S. Patent No. 5,418,384).

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maas (U.S. Patent Publication US 2001/0049893 A1) in view of Lin (U.S. Patent No. 6,464,366).

Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Simms (U.S. Patent No. 5,590,945) in view of Maas (U.S. Patent Publication US 2001/0049893 A1).

Claims 10 and 15 have been cancelled.

Objections to the Drawings

Objections to the drawings have been alleviated by the amendments to the claims. It is respectfully requested that the objections to the drawings be withdrawn.

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Non-Art Amendments

The specification has been amended to correct minor mistakes. The amendments to the specification do not represent any new matter.

The Examiner's objections to informalities in claim 3 have been addressed by the amendments. It is respectfully requested that these objections be withdrawn.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 15, 18 and 19 are rejected as being anticipated by Maas. Applicant submits herewith a Declaration under 37 CFR §1.131. The Declaration evidences conception of the invention before the effective date of Maas with diligence to a constructive reduction to practice. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 11, 12, and 13 are rejected as being anticipated by Simms. Claim 11 calls for a substantially spherical bottom surface and a plurality of microstructures selectively disposed about the bottom surface. The microstructures cooperate with the bottom surface to scatter a portion of the light injected from the associated light source. Simms discloses the bottom surface that is structured with ridges disposed uniformly on two arcuate portions. A patterned effect may be achieved by making portions of the front viewing surface of the light guide opaque or semi-transparent. Thus, Simms discloses that a patterned light might be achieved by blocking some of the light on the top surface of the structure. Simms can not achieve selective scattering of the light off the bottom surface since the ridges are positioned uniformly. In contrast, claim 11 teaches to position the microstructures selectively based on the particular symbol that needs to be displayed. The patterned light design is achieved by scattering light off the microstructures, not manipulating the top surface. Furthermore, the geometry of the bottom surface shape is solitary and spherical. Simms discloses that bottom surface includes two arcuate parts. Neither Simms, nor a combination of the references discloses or suggests having a light guide with a spherically shaped bottom surface and a plurality of the elements positioned

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about the bottom surface at the preselected locations to direct scattering of the light rays in a particular way to form a symbol.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that **claim 11, and claims 12-14, dependent on claim 11, distinguish patentably over Simms.**

In addition, claim 14 calls for a cladding material disposed on the outside of the bottom surface that cooperates with the plurality of microstructures to effectuate the light scattering. It is alleged that Maas discloses a cladding disposed on surface 3 bearing the microstructures. Maas discloses that the deformities themselves are provided with the reflecting coating on a boundary surface. (Para. 0056, lines 12-14, claim 5, element 215 of fig. 3). Maas does not disclose or suggest providing a cladding on the outside of the bottom surface. Claim 14 discloses cladding of the bottom surface to prevent light from escaping the wave guide and scattering it in the preselected pattern. Therefore, claim 14 distinguishes patentably and unobviously over Maas and Simms, taken singularly or in combination.

Claim 16 has been written in independent form. **Claim 16** calls for a light emissive wave guide including a textured surface and defining a center and a perimeter, wherein a thickness of the light emissive wave guide at the perimeter is greater than a thickness of the light emissive wave guide at the center. A plurality of light producing elements is arranged around a perimeter of the wave guide. None of the references discloses or suggests an area light with the LEDs positioned around the perimeter of the wave guide, wherein the wave guide is thicker at the perimeter and thinner at the central portion.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that **claim 16, and claims 17-19, dependent on claim 16, distinguish patentably all references.**

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CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of this application and its early allowance are requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this AMENDMENT A in connection with U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/682,516 is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on Friday, June 27, 2003.

By: 
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